[15th February 1958

Fair price shops

* 3 *S.N.Q.*—SRI N. K. PALANISAMI: Will the Hon. the Minister for Home be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether any instructions have been issued to close all fair price shops from 1st March 1958; and

(*b*) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM: (*a*) & (*b*) The Government have ordered that the sale of rice through the fair price shops in the State shall be stopped with effect from 1st March 1958. Wheat will however be continued to be sold in the fair price shops on the present scale. The fair price shops *will not therefore be closed* with effect from 1st March 1958, as presumed by the Honourable member.

The Government had to issue the above orders in view of the fact that the Government of India have agreed to supply rice to the fair price shops only upto the end of February 1958 and secondly the rice position is likely to improve in view of the current samba harvest and it may be possible for the public to get their requirements of rice in the market at a reasonable price.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister may answer the other questions also on this subject. All the members can put supplementary questions after the answers are given.

* 4 *S.N.Q.*—SRI N. K. PALANISAMI: Will the Hon. the Minister for Home be pleased to state whether the Government propose to call for tenders for the purchase of 20,000 tons of rice for returning the loan taken from the Union Government?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM: The question whether rice has to be procured from Tanjore district out of the current samba harvest for returning the rice loan taken from the Government of India is still under consideration.

* 128 *Q.*—SRI N. K. PALANISAMI: Will the Hon. the Minister for Home be pleased to state—

(*a*) the quantity of rice stock with the Government during 1957;

(*b*) the number of relief shops opened in the State during 1957;

(*c*) the quantity of wheat and rice supplied to them during the year 1957; and

(*d*) the retail selling price of rice in the relief shops?